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INTERNATIONAL STUDIES OF VALUES IN POLITICS

CULTURAL AND PERSONAL VALUES IN INDIAN  
POLITICS : A REVIEW

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The complex interrelation between the ideological and normative components of traditional Indian culture, on the one hand, and the goals, styles and motives characterizing Indian polity, on the other, have engaged extracted politically relevant concepts from Hindu religious texts towards the beginning of this century. With the growing interests in the process of political modernization and in the psycho-social aspects of nation-building, the various dimensions along which the interwoven values of traditional society and the normative assumptions of a superimposed "modern" political culture combine to generate, or fail to generate, culturally meaningful and functionally valid symbols and criteria of choice, have been recognized to be critical for the survival of a modern political community in India. Yet empirical works that in any way bring into salience the role of social values in Indian politics are not numerous. In fact, studies of human values and of political organisations and processes, in the context of Indian society, have both mainly been speculative and ad hoc, rather than behavioural, upto now. Consequently, this review can do no more than indicate the broad research trends by enumerating and describing the concepts that have most often been employed in interpreting value-politics interrelation in India, and to specify the extent to which behavioural data and scientific methods have brought to bear upon each of these concepts. Also, as these studies have centred more around values than around political behaviour, this review is organized in terms of normative rather than political concepts. The irreversibly one-way relationship between "independent" values and "dependent" politics, that seems to emerge from the following analysis, is therefore accidental.

The first task of the review must necessarily be the isolation of individual norms, because social scientists have generally used value concepts incidentally, without undertaking a full-fledged systematic value analysis of the Indian political ideas and behaviour. It is possible therefore to know something about the patterning of values only by summing the results of these incidental use of individual concepts. In this section, such a summation has been attempted in terms of a few major normative affirmations or emphases; which subsume under them webs of discrete but interrelated values, potentiating each other. This "listing" is, by no means, exhaustive and is designed solely to illustrate a particular approach to the normative interpretation of politics.

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The enumeration must begin with a complex of values which many researchers (Weber, 1958; Samartha, 1959, 7; Koestler, 1960; Riencourt, 1961; 9; Kapp, 1963; Smith, 1963; Nakamura, 1964) believe to be the nucleus of Indian value system. This is the pervasive tendency to ignore history and the process of time -- a tendency which is said to derive its sanction from the central evaluative theme of continuity or intermittence (see review in Rowe, 1964, 12). Some of the earlier expressions of this value in scriptures and rituals have been explored by Vivekananda (1923), Radhakrishnan (1940), Motwani (1947), Panikkar (1955) and Kosambi (1962), and a highly successful poetic interpretation of it has been given by Eliot (1959, 13). Nakamura (1964) and, indirectly, Morris (1956) have dealt with the systematizing role of this value in giving the Hindu culture an unified world view, and Carstairs (1957) has made an empirical attempt to relate its

expressions in the interrelated themes of resignation, submissiveness and passivity to Indian national character. Some artistic reflections on its adaptive functions, in the connotations of fatalism and repetitiousness, can also be had in Maughum (1943) and Chaudhury (1951, 1965a, 1965b).

It is strange that inspite of this wide consensus regarding the significance of this value, not many systematic inquiries have been made into its political functions -- the highly impressionistic attempts of Koestler (1960), Riencourt (1961) and Lamb (1963) to specify its influence on the decision-making of Indian leaders being actually incidental to their major theses. Kapp's (1963) analysis of the role of this value in the process and problems of Indian economic development is more rigorous, but is obviously not fully relevant. More pertinent is Smith's (1963, 40) untested hypothesis that this value encourages the integration of the different religious communities within a secular nation-state -- the principle of tolerance towards other belief-groups being a correlate of the tendency to undervalue history.

This central concern with "cyclicism", with the associated belief in karma, Cormack (1962, 18-19) feels, is loosing its grip on the Indian mind and society. Consequently, resignation and apathy are changing to hope and "individuation", generating in the process tension and anxiety. Some observers (Srinivas, 1962; Gould, 1965; and Roy, 1965b) feel that these ventures to change the "ordained" and the "fated" actively, by moving away from prescribed inches to self-created roles and role-models, are reflected in the attempts of the traditional social groups to seek political power through disintegrative political behaviour, as a reaction to earlier power-deprivation, and generally in the response pattern

generated by the processes of social mobilization and political competition (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1960; Berreman, 1965; Kothari and Maru, 1965).

The rejection of materialism in Indian thought, conceptualised as the evaluative theme of transcendentalism or reification (Weber, 1958; Mandelbaum, 1964; Misra, 1965; see review in Rowe, 1964), is actually an extension of the fatalistic belief in cyclical time. This not only includes what is popularly known as Indian spiritualism or detachment, but is also expressed in overabstraction, premature generalization, and the global and "besetting passion for metaphysics and philosophizing" (Zimmer, 1951; Dandekar, 1958). Murphy (1953), Riencourt (1961) and Lamb (1963) have called attention to the "complete abstraction of time, history and person", and Opler (1952), Kosambi (1956), Nair (1961), Radhakrishnan (1957) and Brown (1959, 1961) have discussed the behavioural and ideological references of the concepts of maya and anasakti, including the total inability of Indian tradition to conceive of competitiveness for material gains as a legitimate function within a polity. This rejection of reality and matter, in all their forms, and the consequent vagueness of Hindu world-view has been discussed by Schweitzer (1957) and Nehru (1964) too. Renunciation, another correlate of this objectivity-denying weltanschauung, deriving its sanction also from the emphasis on self-denial (see below), has been shown to play a crucial role in the process and rate of Indian economic growth (Singer, 1956; Goheen, Srinivas, Karve and Singer, 1958; Kapp, 1963) and in what has sometimes been referred to as the "saintly" style in Indian politics (Morris-Jones, 1963a). Carstairs (1957) hypothesizes this transcendentalism to be the reflection of a latent withdrawal and of a

weak grip on reality in the modal personality. As has already been pointed out, the relation between this value and political behaviour has not been thoroughly investigated, even though it is possible to hypothesize that the meaningfulness or perceived social significance of political institutions and the internalization of political symbols are, in many instances, resultants of this norm.

A small group of researchers has however consistently denied that this so-called anchored belief in a supra-individual spiritual reality has influenced Indian society to any significant extent (for brief discussions of this view see Goheen et al, 1958; Aurobindo, 1960, 45; and particularly Dasgupta, 1964). They have supported their thesis by reinterpreting ancient texts and by accounts of commercial involvement, entrepreneurial risktaking and business acumen of earlier generations. In addition to its implied inability to distinguish between commercial skills and industrial ethics, and between materialistic values and an ego-alien concern with survival and subsistence under scarcity, this position is yet to marshal adequate empirical support for itself. A more sophisticated approach is that of Elder's (1959) who tries to show how ideological adaption to industrial realities can take the place within the perspective of traditional values, through the reinterpretation rather than rejection or denial of the latter.

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The stress on timelessness has underneath it an implicit assumption of unity between Brahman or essence and atman or the essential reality of self (Dandekar, 1958; Lamb, 1963). This apparently metaphysical monism has real behavioural content in the living belief that the individual is one with

everything and that the ultimate reality is absolutely unitary (Kodanda Rao, 1939; Radhakrishnan, 1944). As Riencourt (1961, 9) summarises it,

"The Hindu tradition has made every effort to overcome the individual personality, the monstrous ego, to instil into man this awareness of collective, impersonal and timeless absolute".

The result is a firm rejection of the concept of opposition or dvandva and the continuous attempts to get beyond it in all spheres of action, including politics (Morris-Jones, 1963b, p.12). For instance, Northrop (1952), Lamb (1963b, 114), Anand (1963, 80) and Carnell (1964) have related Indian foreign-policy decisions, particularly those relating to reconciliation and non-alignment, to the Hindu concept of singleness of ultimate reality. Wider implications of this traditional "universalism" have been discussed by Green (1959, 305), who feels that the strongest sense of Indian unity and originality is rooted herein, and by Murphy (1953, 44, 268), who believes that it has generated a veneration for the process of evolution and tolerance of the new, the strange, and the different. Nandy's (1966) case study confirms that it operates as one of the major cultural sources of creativity, and is related to the legitimization of innovations within intellectual elites.

A corollary of this monistic position is the emphasis on harmony, which can be defined as an attempt to create or maintain a balance amongst inconsistencies, contradictions and disharmonies (Abid.Hussain, 1963; Carnell, 1964, 281). Rowe's (1964, 12-13) review shows how this theme pervades folk-lore, rituals and interpersonal relations and is built into even the concepts of good health and adequate body image. Azad (1956, 20-21) and Dean (1959, 2) agree that the political emphases on mediation and conciliation are reflections of this

deep-seated and overriding concern with harmony, and Radha-krishnan (1955, p.40) and Smith (1963, p.140) have traced the secular nature of the Indian constitution to this monistic concept of harmony. It is significant, in this connection, that some of the nineteenth-century modernizers like Rammohan Roy, preaching the cause of cultural "synthetism", were also keen on revitalizing Upanishadic monism as the core of modern Hinduism (see Toynbee, 1954, 580-623; Hay, 1965). On the whole, it seems a plausible possible hypothesis that the pliability and flexibility of Indian political thought, institutions and processes, as reflected in their ability to absorb alien cultural themes as well as a variety of objective and subjective group demands, are functions of this value.

• Even success of group action is measured by the degree of harmony or consensus, brought about through a highly specified system of allocation of rights, duties and responsibilities which meet the diverse, conflicting ends of the individuals involved (Rowe, 1964, 12-14; Wood, 1959, 379-380). Derrett (1961, 15-16) has discussed the legal and institutional implications of this ancient preference for unanimity over abstract justice. Rowe (1964), Morris-Jones (1963b, 11-12), Stone, Retzlaff and Fitzgerald (see discussion in Spann, 1963, 112) and Palmer (1965) mentioned the utilisation by a number of contemporary political leaders of the theme of harmony and of the "doctrine of synthesis" as concepts relevant to the development of a partyless political system (See Roy, 1960, and Narayan, 1965, for systematic statements of this position). Similarly, Kothari (1964) and Gopal Krishna (1966) have demonstrated how consensual decision-making operates as a fulcrum of India's "one-party dominance system". There is implicit recognition in their analyses that this principle of consensus derives its strength from the extant normative



parametres of the Indian society. The opposite view is represented by Chaudhuri (1951, 212-213) and Panikkar (1956, 28) who believe that the roots of democracy, as expressed in mutuality and efficient functioning in groups on the basis of consensus, are essentially occidental in character and alien to the major currents of the Indian tradition.

Scholasticism, through which oneness with the absolute is attained, is another correlate of monism in the Indian situation (Aurobindo, 1943; Radhakrishnan, 1944, 1955; Rowe, 1964; Nandy, 1966). Though Radhakrishnan (1940, 1944) and Panikkar (1955) have tried to reinterpret this value so as to give it a new functional validity, historically the major influence on Indian academic life has been of a transcendental and mystical nature (Kosambi, 1956; Shils, 1959, 1961a; Lamb, 1963). This influence has been critical because of the important part intellectuals and scholars have played in the Indian polity, particularly at times of political change. For example, Chaudhuri (1941, 178-218) gives a scintillating account of the impact of this value on the pattern of "assimilationistic" modernization in nineteenth century India, and also shows how it successfully isolated the intellectual elite from their contemporary society, containing their impact within a small, often ineffective, urban minority (see also Tangri, 1961). Meanwhile, through its influence on the process of socialization and on the dynamics of rural society, traditional scholars like the brahmins and the gurus have exerted, till recently, a critical influence on the political functioning of Hindu society (Nair, 1951; Shils, 1961b). Shils (1961b) and Kothari (1965), however, feel that the influence of intellectuals in the political arena is decreasing and growing depoliticization, within their ranks, is throwing up professional politicians less committed to

ideological or doctrinaire positions. Harrison (1959) agrees that, with increasing mass participation, factionalism within parties has started reflecting the growing group-strength of those without formal higher education. The manner in which this trend diminishes the influence of explicit political concepts, derived from theoretical and intellectual assumptions, and potentiates the influence of implicit individual values, of ideologically and theoretically unsophisticated professionals, remains to be examined. In sum, though the role of intelligentsia in political processes have been investigated, there has been no comparable interest in the functional aspects of scholastic-ideological commitments in political decision-making.

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Dharma or duty is a concept that has often acted as the supreme authority and as the final source of temporal power in India (Prabhu, 1954; Weber, 1958; Dandekar, 1958, 240; Brown, 1959; Weiner, 1960, 160; Karve, 1961a; Rowe, 1964; Atreya, Chatterji and Danielous, 23). The structural-functional context of the value in the patterning and legitimization of local political power and decision-making authority has been defined by Bendix (1964), and its impact upon traditional law has been mentioned by Ishwaran (1964). As a venerated religious principle or idea, its roots of course can be traced even to Geeta:

"Whatever is done must be done not for oneself but as a duty, in a spirit of sacrifice to God with detachment and without a feeling of personal stake in the results".

Apparently, personal morality here gives way to an impersonal sense of duty, essentially amoral in nature, on the assumption that for him who attains inward detachment, neither good nor

evil exists any longer here below (Zimmer, 1951). A distinctive view of this norm can be had in Sarkar (1922) who, decades back, rejected a purely ideological interpretation of the concept of dharma and referred to its temporal and spatial, coordinates in even the traditional Hindu society, and politics.

The correlated emphasis on ascription and rejection of achievement have been studied by a number of social scientists (Green, 1959, 313; McClelland, 1961, 1963; Kapp, 1963; Hitchcock and Mintern, 1963) in different contexts; but their ability to reduce the available "free-floating" political powers and resources and, thereby, influence the process of modernization, remain to be studied. However, Lamb (1963, 114, 107) has related this emphasis on duty to the desire to avoid political choices and Smith (1963) feels that this tendency to regulate society through duty is the only major obstacle, in Hindu theology, to the integration of different religious groups of India within the framework of a modern nation-state. Weakening of this normative standards is implied in the studies of Mencher (1963) and Cormack (1961, 21) who lead evidence to show that achievement and personal initiative are gaining ground as important values and the concepts of individual freedom and rights are increasingly becoming potent political symbols. Weiner (1960, 166-167) substantiates this by depicting a history of conflictual attitude towards this value and by showing how social tension has been generated in the educated middle-class with their exposure, in course of the last century, to a "large-scale introduction of achievement criteria" against which traditional behaviour and values have gradually become disfunctional and deviant.

Other values rooted in this general concern with duty are segmentation or separateness (Ghurje, 1955; Opler and Singh, 1959; Cormack, 1961, 25; Morris-Jones, 1963a, 82-83; Rowe, 1964, 16; and Prasad, 1965) and political perfectionism (Morris-Jones 1963b, 10-11). The former has been held responsible for interpersonal distance, bureaucratization, ritualistic formality and incompetence at different levels of governmental functioning by Cormack, while the latter has been related to factionalism and political disintegration by Morris-Jones. Segmentation has also been related to the clear distinction between the functions of political and religious authorities in Hindu tradition, from which the contemporary stress on secularism can be said to have been derived (Weiner, 1960, 160; Sinha, 1965). On the other hand, the growing regionalism and linguistic group feelings may be partially a function of this tendency to formalize social differences and distances.

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Suppression of desires with the concomitant concern with self-denial and self sacrifice has, in recent years, become one of the politically most significant norms in India. The equation which Gandhi made between self-discipline and self-government is a too obvious illustration (Morris-Jones, 1963b, 12). Others who have observed the operation of this value in non-political contexts are Carstairs (1957), Koestler (1960), Riencourt (1961), and Narayan (1962).

This self-control mainly carries the connotations of aggression-control or nonviolence, in which form it has been one of the prime movers of political decision-making, governmental as well as non-governmental (Green, 1959, 307). The unconditional ahimsa of the Gandhian variant has shaped the political life of India in no uncertain manner (see Gandhi,

1950b, for a personal statement and Ramachandran and Mahadevan, 1964, for some recent reassessments of functional and behavioural aspects of Gandhian political philosophy). Probably for this reason, social scientists have shown a persistent interest in genesis, dynamics and embeddedness of this value in Indian life. There is a surprising degree of consensus amongst them that this demand for total nonviolence actually represents a deep-seated conflict about aggression in the modal Indian.

To give some examples, both Hitchcock and Mintern (1963) and Murphy (1953) feel that child training in India neither gives the aggressive impulses a chance to be patterned or shaped, nor equips the individual to learn techniques of resolving intergroup conflicts. Consequently, when aggression is aroused under economic or political stress, it bursts out in a "primitive chaotic way" (Murphy, 1953, 52; Chaudhuri, 1965c, 97-115). Empirical, even if indirect, support for this view is available from Hitchcock and Mintern (1963), Jain (1955), and Nandy (1966) who demonstrate that, inspite of all avowed ideological and educational emphasis on nonviolence, themes of aggression predominate at the projective level of personality functioning. Though Chaudhuri (1966) has recently tried to interpret agitational politics in West Bengal with reference to the manner in which latent aggressive needs are channelised and expressed by culturally defined norms, such psychodynamic concepts have not been explicitly employed in the interpretation of politics of group conflicts and conflict resolutions (see Chaudhuri, 1965a, for an oversimplified literary description of Indian attitudes to external problems as functions of Hindu cultural themes, and Weiner, 1960, for a somewhat better systemic analysis of violence in Calcutta politics).

Conservatism as a behavioural extension of the more central phantasies about conservation have been mentioned by Taylor (1943), Carstairs (1957) and Koestler (1962). Carstairs has shown that this conservatism is associated with a high degree of anxiety about loss of power, status, masculinity, respect and property. Acceptance of that which is already there becomes, consequently, a valued goal and everything new and unstable becomes a source of suspicion and fear. Concomitantly, the idea that purity should be conserved, in the face of the possibility of pollution through contact, has pervaded Indian folklores, classics, rituals and interpersonal relations (Carstairs, 1957; Rowe, 1964, 18; Green, 1959, 307).

These values have been shown to bear special relation to the patterns and trends of caste politics (see below), but otherwise their influence on political action remains undefined. However, Morris-Jones (1963b, 11) mentions a more generalised emphasis on purity, expressed in the concern with incorruptibility, invulnerability and cleanliness of mind and body, which Gandhi (1950a, 16) has introduced as politically relevant concepts in recent times. On the other hand, the fear of being "let down" by the corrupt and the vulnerable in politics has led to a lack of trust and mutuality and to the consequent inability to share responsibility at all levels of political functioning (Morris-Jones, 1964, 61-64; Cormack, 1962, 24-25).

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Duty in India also implies that all relationships are or should be hierarchically arranged and that power, responsibility and the prerogative of decision-making should only lie at the highest level (Prabhu, 1954; Karve, 1961a; Kapp, 1963; Prasad, 1965). Karve (1961b), Srinivas (1962, 112-119) and Lamb (1963, 99) insist that there is a deeply embedded tendency

in Hinduism to grade into hierarchy everything it touches, an affirmation for which there is a substantial quantity of support. To give some examples, Radhakrishnan (1940, 316), Green (1959, 310) and Srinivas (1962, 87-97) have pointed out that even Hindu tolerance is not the tolerance of equality, but is bound within the compass of hierarchy. This affects not only caste-politics and traditional social relations, but also occupational choice and work relations, because the traditional, emergent, and functional hierarchies, though often operating at cross-purposes, ultimately manage to deepen the moorings of hierarchy as a group value (Weiner, 1960, 166). Thus, even the westernised educational system, introduced by the British and Indian urban elites, while it has increased social mobility and class distinctions and, thereby, to some extent has undermined traditional criteria of social groupings, identifications and references, has also created a new pattern as well as concept of hierarchical relations in the process. In fact, as Shils (1961, 3) points out, this educational system itself has become, over the decades, "crushingly hierarchical".

The result is the disregard for autonomy and initiative (Hitchcock and Minter, 1963) and the persistence of the modal traits of dependence and authoritarianism (Murphy, 1953, 56; Damle, 1955; Tinker, 1959; Rudolph and Rudolph, 1964; Bharati, 1965). The last-named trait has naturally received more serious attention because of its deep relevance to the problems of democratic development. Morris-Jones (1957, 33-37; 1963a, 78), for example, affirms that in the traditional idiom of Indian politics, "authority has its natural, substantially hereditary seats" and cannot be dislodged without radically modifying the entire social structure. Basham's (1954) extensive work on the structural and administrative correlates of authoritarian values in early Indian society and Bendix' (1964)

brief description of the patriarchal role of village elders in group decisions and conflict resolutions, seem to support this. Lamb (1963, 106) fears that India's caste-based religious paternalism may, given a chance, develop into a secular authoritarianism, deriving its support from the modal phantasy that political heroes (Rama, Shivaji, Gandhi) are incarnations of God and that their intuition is superior to logic. Opler, Rowe and Stroop (1965) demonstrate how the fear of displeasing established authority, and obeisance towards it, influence rural voting and electioneering behaviour, the implication being that in any competitive political situation, a ruling party has always an edge over the opposition. Contrary to popular belief, charisma in India, it seems to emerge, attaches as much to roles as to individuals and, in the absence of a rational-legal concept of authority, these roles remain as yet defined in terms of traditional identifications. A dissenting voice is that of Rudolph and Rudolph (1964, 7) who somewhat hastily conclude, from the absence of support for authoritarian political parties in the first two national elections, that political authoritarianism is not truly influential in India. However, Ross (1961) also notices a weakening of authoritarianism within the family in more politically conscious urban areas.

Social hierarchy has another interesting aspect in India: it is the superiority, at the normative level, of the male principle over the female principle (Chaudhuri, 1951; Panikkar, 1955; Carstairs, 1957; Cormack, 1961; Lamb, 1963; Rowe, 1964). The political pay-off of this is not clear, though in their case study, Opler, Rowe and Stroop (1965) have tried to relate differential evaluation of sex roles to Indian voting behaviour.

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It is evident from the foregoing that individualism is not deeply rooted in the Indian culture and political institutions which are dependent on this value have a tottering societal base. This negation of individualism has been traced to the diffusion of identification which depersonalization in course of the process of socialization within a joint family necessarily produces and which living within a village, organised along caste lines, consensually validates (Taylor, 1943; Murphy, 1953; Carstairs, 1957; Green, 1959, 310-313; Koestler, 1962; Prasad, 1965; Khatri, 1965). In effect this means "terrific pressure on the individual if in any way he breaks from the tissue structure of the village life...." or defies orthodoxy or traditional authority in some way (Murphy, 1953, 31). Some social scientists believe that there are the ingredients of integrative commitments in this stress on familism, and a sense of collective responsibility in politics can be built upon it. (Mukherji, 83; Green, 1959, 310).

In contradistinction to this position, Morris-Jones (1963b, 83) and Lamb (1963, 41) believe that Hinduism encourages a special form of sociopolitical isolation and alienation by stressing the possibility of individual salvation and karma. This, they feel, lead to a special type of individualism in which each individual is held responsible for his own status and has the power to make a new status for himself in another life. Kothari's study of direct action (1960) shows that the mechanical development of parliamentary democracy reinforces this trend and, in effect, provides support of authoritarian tendencies in politics. As Sinha, (1966, 9) concludes from

his psychological study of community responsiveness,

"There was little evidence that villagers had any developed community-feeling, village-consciousness, or showed much concern about the problems of the country at large. They were largely individualistic and ego-centric in outlook, not very much agitated by the general problems of the village-community or the nation"

This is consistent with Cantril's (1963) findings too.

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Lastly, one must mention the growing concern for nationalism or nation-orientedness, which, within a traditionally apolitical social order (see below) is bringing into sharp contrast the allegiance to older reference groups and responsiveness towards national efforts and goals. As a value which, by definition, partly supersedes primordial identifications and identities, broadbased on the triple pillars of caste, joint family and village, it is almost inseparable from other "imported" values enshrined in the formal political structure of today's India. (More about the nationalism-localism dimension later.) Even though there has not been any strictly empirical study of how the culturally and structurally fragmented Indian polity has been trying, in course of the last two centuries, to develop national reference and identifications and how these, on their part, are gradually being incorporated within the broader process of national-identity formation, social scientists are becoming more and more interested in nationalism as it partially bridges the historical gap between society and politics in India (see Philips; Desai, 1954; and particularly Misra, 1961, for some interesting insights into the structural and historical aspects of this change).

Cantril's (1963) observation that "in India today, personal experience is relatively detached from national discourse" becomes relevant only in this sense of being a consequence of this traditional hiatus. His conclusions are also consistent with Cormack's (1962) finding that, while there is a sense of responsibility towards one's own family and ingroup, relationship with those outside this charmed circle is characterized by distrust and indifference (see also Morris-Jones, 1963a). Sinha's (1966) ongoing study also seems to confirm the presence of this "amoral familism". He has found little concern with national status, problems and anxieties, most of his rural subjects being concerned with personal and familial goals. From within this extremely limited frame of reference, national needs, aspirations and fears naturally seem remote. While the image of functionally and structurally isolated village, invoked by nearly all studies of early Indian society (see for example, Basham, 1954; Srinivas, 1960; Dubey, 1958; Drekmeier, 1962; Bendix, 1964) is dying out, that of the psychologically isolated and alienated village community seem to be taking clearer shape. In this sense, these studies are not incompatible with those which stress that the village is no longer an autonomous sociopolitical universe for its inhabitants, nor an useful isolate, conceptually, for the social scientists (Cohn, 1955; Opler, 1956, 1960; Srinivas, 1960; Finker, 1963; Taylor, Ensminger, Johnson and Joyce, 1965); they probably only indicate a "lag" in the value system, mutating slower than other systemic aspects of Indian sociopolitics.

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The above discussion makes clear, one hopes, two relatively recent developments. Firstly, though most of the values mentioned here have their historical antecedents or traditional validity, they have undergone and are undergoing changes in response to contemporary social and political structures and processes, developing new meanings and new objective references in course of this process of adaptation. To give examples, authoritarian submission, individualism and consensus are cases where changes in the social background of the values have introduced newer connotations in the values themselves and have altered their original references to make them, say, more secular and more universalistic and may have thus changed the nature and extent of their impact on political decisions. In spite of the very high degree of agreement on the values of traditional Hinduism, there is consequently no way of relating these values to contemporary politics without involved reinterpretation and translation.

Secondly, it is becoming increasingly "tricky" to operationally isolate value-concepts from other motivational or attitudinal constructs. How far today authoritarianism or the stress on ritual purity is an ego-accepted, ethically preferred position, actively utilised for choice from amongst alternative desiderata, and how far an ego-alien, disfunctional, tradition-remnant, or moral-anxiety provoking motive-state reinforced by social sanctions, can no longer be clearly specified at a time when rapid value-change is taking place in response to, and as part of, larger mutations in the motivational basis of Indian society and Indian identities. Yet, such clarifications must be sought if one hopes to study value-change and the extent to which values, as distinct from other motivational units, influence decisions. This calls for intensive case-studies of culture-personality interaction within

personal systems, rather than large-scale attitude surveys.

Lastly, this review reveals a preoccupation, in researchers, with Brahminical or Upanishadic values--the "pure" norms, so to speak. This is consistent with the cultural-configuration approach to values that characterized a number of anthropological field studies some years back. Counterparts of these configurational values in individual and group behaviour, attitudes, thought and imaginal productions have often been ignored and, as a result, these concepts have served mainly as interpreters of traditional political thought, rather than of present-day political behaviour, both at institutional and individual levels. Such an one-sided approach, concentrating only on one level of social functioning, clearly presupposes a perfect accord amongst the cultural pattern, the nodal personality system and socialization techniques (which "fit" the operant individual and group values to the pattern values). In a horizontally and vertically fragmented society such as this, characterised by a wide variety of marginal as well as changing cultural strains and their attendant histories (Singer, 1959; Cohn, 1961, 248-249), this leads not only to oversimplification but to misrepresentation.

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A critical consideration for the value researcher in India therefore is what has often been referred to as ethical plurality and situation-specificity of values, because the predictive and interpretive powers of generalised value concepts depend, to a very great extent, on this. In all cultures, certain values operate in all areas of human action, while others are particularly relevant to only certain areas of social behaviour. In India not only do the second type of

values predominate, but such diversification of ethical commitment is sanctioned and encouraged by the value system (see Rowe, 1964, 34-36). In an otherwise naive study, Begum and Hafeez (1964) show that values vary over caste, occupational and sex boundaries and that even the gap between individual and perceived social values widen and shrink with the valuer's social situation. Stone (1963, 12) also mentions the "capacity for coexistence of wholly diverse moral, political and cultural orders" and Mukherji (p83) refers to the alternatives of goals and values available to the individual in the Indian normative system. As Riencourt (1961, 51) puts it,

"There are as many moral code as appointed stations in life, rather than one common ethical system for all men regardless of position and social function."

The reflections of this plurality can be seen in the relatively autonomous existence which the various cultural and social subsystems have been enjoying, particularly with reference to the political system (Eisenstadt, 1965). This autonomy is also implied in Weiner (1965a, 1965b) and Morris-Jones (1963a, 1963b) and changes in its nature brought about by the greater articulation between the modern political and traditional by Eisenstadt (1965).

Schweitzer (1957) has traced this ethical plurality to Hindu polytheism and has interpreted this disinclination to make sharp moral choices, in terms of a consistent and universal moral code, and the lack of "active ethics" as an expression of the nonethical and amoral nature of the Hindu society (see a review of the argument in Goodwin, 1956). Chaudhuri (1951, 214-215) too has referred to this "avoidance of personal moral issues", though in more virulent and apocalyptic tones. Lamb

(1963, 113) sums up as follows:

"Monism -- the belief that ultimate reality is absolutely single -- inevitably creates a moral climate quite different from that created by the dualism to which the West is more accustomed ... even if some things are more divine than the others, evil does not have the hard, tough reality that it has in the religious beliefs of the West".

In other words, the situation-specificity of values is closely intertwined with the question of commitment to an universal and absolute "scheme" of values-as-moral-imperatives. In the absence of a culturally inculcated sense of internal ethics, though there is acceptance of certain values as ethical preferences, personal or group commitment to them, as criteria of decisions may sometimes be paradoxically minimal. The tendency to derive values from the external controls of a duty-for-duty's-sake perspective, rather than from internalized checks and standards of judgement, reinforces this split (see Riesman, 1950, for an analogous description of the tradition-directed type). In fact, the awareness and even cultivation of alternative ethics, the culturally determined and supported disinclination to view personal values as supreme or absolute, and the living faith that all dissents represent aspects of an indivisible truth and therefore reconciliation, at some level or other, is always possible with them, has given an altogether different flavour to the Indian values (see also Zimmer, 1951). This is likely to be more true of politics, where the long absence of political power and of legitimized political authority have combined to retard the crystallization of explicit political values. This can have two clear implications. Firstly, the extent to which values influence or do not influence decisions, particularly, in relation to the "context" of decision-making, must be examined. More so, when one is concerned with political decisions phenomena, because of the

observed (Riencourt, 1961, 400; Panikkar, 1963, 18-20) potentials in the Indian society of generating "a certain cynical ruthlessness" and "naked realism" in political matters as exemplified by Mahabharata and the Arthashastra, where politics is pictured as a situation-specific amoral pursuit. Secondly, the principle of situation-specificity provides a distinctive and, in some ways, imaginative, rationale to the individual separating political from social values, because they are perceived as belonging to two entirely different spheres which are not yet meaningfully interlinked (Nair, 1961, 191; Stone, 1963, 112; Wolfsohn, 1963, 96, 112). This traditional plurality has obviously been reinforced by the historical reality of a superimposed, new and alien political framework on an apolitical society. In a cultural history such as this, any attempt to relate political decision-making directly to social values may actually fail to yield important results. A plausible alternative is to investigate the politicization of these values, and to find out how they are gradually being translated into the political idiom, as a result of exposure to present-day political forces, engendering in the process political values which are not exclusively derivatives of social norms, but are functionally articulated with them.

## 4

No study trying to establish an empirical relationship between the patterned system of values in India, on the one hand; and political behaviour, on the other, has been attempted upto now. Nevertheless, studies indirectly dealing with the extent to which the traditional attitudinal frame of the Indian society interreacts, as a whole, with the demand of politics and in course of it, influences, and is influenced by,



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the latter, bring into salience the relationship between these variables. For example, some (Srinivas, 1962; Weiner, 1965a, 1965c) have drawn attention to the manner in which the recruitment-pattern of functionaries and politicization of traditional groups have changed the nature and dynamics of the political system as well as of the social structure, which earlier workers have viewed as atleast analytically separable "units of observation" (see above). This is generating new values and needs which do not reflect the dynamics of either of the systems, thus casting doubt even on the "conceptual purity" of these two systems. Some of the better executed studies of changing sociocultural system (Dubey, 1955, 1958; Singer, 1956; Srinivas, 1960; Hitchcock and Mintern, 1963), while not always concentrating upon values, and sometimes even underplaying them, nevertheless demonstrate that the earlier leave-me-alone compatibilities and autonomies of some of the societal subsystems, though still rather prominent, are nevertheless showing signs of crumbling. Specially, changes are noticeable not only in the contents are interactions of society and politics, but also in the extent to which these systems remain clearly demarcated entities. Some other interesting explorations have been made too. For instance, Brass' (1966) study of hierarchy of values involved in caste politics, inspite of the investigator's concern with what others would probably conceptualise as reference groups, introduces the concept of levels in situation-specific political values and underscores the relevance to these of the relatively neglected value-change process, sanskritization. In a cruder fashion, Anand (1963) and Atreya et al once again examine the fit between old sanskritic ideologies and emergent political values. Bailey's (1960) study of political behaviour, in relation to the structural

and dynamic aspects of rural communities in Orissa, shows how the changing pattern of caste relations and the process of sanskritization are brought in within the sphere of competitive politics and provide part of the ideational basis of integrative commitments. Roy's (1965) study of Congress factionalism explicitly uses a number of normative concepts to explain the dynamics of political fragmentation in an Indian state. He shows that the impact of changes and attempted changes in the institutionalised relationships (caste relations for example) and socio-economic incentive-patterns (party and ministerial appointments for example) can modify the degree and nature of commitment to a party's overall policies and ideological moorings. Similarly, some researchers (Opler and Singh, 1952; Bailey, 1960; Rudolph and Rudolph, 1960; Srinivas, 1962; Tilman, 1963) have shown that, while the present political system has given a new lease of life to caste groups and caste identifications, by broadening the basis of caste ties and by politicizing caste associations, it has by these very means changed the nature and meaning of caste and has eroded and sabotaged its traditional normative assumptions.

The three case studies of parliamentary by-elections made by Maru (1965), Ahmed (1965) and Roy (1965) throw into relief the manner in which the localism-nationalism dimension comes into play in voting and electioneering behaviour. Particularly, the manner in which traditional interests, anxieties and values are appealed to -- even by leaders apparently wedded to the modern political-ideological system -- and the overall situational context within which the traditional symbols are invoked by the local leadership have been discussed (for a more theoretical discussion of the issues involved, see the contradictory conclusions of Harrison,

1960; and Weiner, 1962). The latter aspect of community and caste oriented voting behaviour has been underscored by Sirsikar (1962, 1965) and Kothari and Seth (1965) in their case studies of a Maharashtra and a Gujarat constituency respectively. It emerges from their analyses that there is no one-to-one relationship between the traditional values on the one hand, and commitment to localistic and fragmentary politics on the other. Economic, ethnic and linguistic allegiances blur the normative and ideological dividing-lines. A similar conclusion, though with many more reservations, is possible from the case studies of rural constituencies made by Opler (1959), Nayar (1965), Kothari and Shah (1965) and Weiner (1965). They vindicate the commonsense proposition that the traditional norms are dying harder in the villages. Even Gould's (1965) paper, which demonstrates an increasing stress on socio-economic divisions in electioneering behaviour, also shows that the traditional-modern continuum, in political values and ideology, is actually a multidimensional one.

## 5

Most of the studies reviewed in this paper are impressionistic in the sense that, even when they deal with behaviour, no systematic method has been employed in the collection of behavioural samples and in the analysis of data. Some studies do not even do this and are primarily dependent on the interpretation of scriptural or mythological texts and literary classics. Examples of the former are Coomaraswamy (1957), Koestler (1960), Riencourt (1961), Narayan (1962), Carnell (1963), and Lamb (1963); while, that of the latter are Zimmer (1951) Dandekar, 1953; Schweitzer (1957) and Nakamura (1963). The validity of these studies can be assessed only with reference to the extent of consensus they have produced -- a

dubious procedure in any case, because of the great differences in levels of analysis and abstraction, in the nature of the data adduced, and particularly in the type of behaviour they try to interpret.

Therefore, though these can be a vital source of hypotheses, for developing a more systematic conceptual frame of reference, one must depend on the behaviourally-oriented community studies and system analyses undertaken by researchers like Bailey (1959), Weiner (1960), Morris-Jones (1963a, 1963b), Kothari (1963) Roy (1965b), in the political field, and Prabhu (1954), Karve (1959), Kapp (1963), Hitchcock and Minteru (1963), Srinivas (1964), and others in the area of social values. Unfortunately, it is extremely difficult to relate these two sets of studies conceptually and to arrive at an unified view of the entire field. While the political scientists have employed complex political concepts and models, the normative variables used by them have remained ill-defined and, often, give the impression of having crept into the systemic models stealthily. The social anthropologists and social psychologists, on the other hand, have been able to deal with political variables indirectly and, sometimes, at only a rather low level of sophistication.

Further methodological elegance within the folds of this the latter group is available in the works of Jennings (1962), Carstairs (1957), Hitchcock and Minteru (1963), Cormack (1961), Morris (1956) etc., who have not only employed superior instruments, but have also tried to link their research operations meaningfully to the theory of social behaviour that have guided their studies. For instance, the clinical techniques of Carstairs and the attitude questionnaire of Morris, in addition to being refined measures, operationalise rigorously

defined concepts and behavioural models. As a result, inspite of the objections one might have about the conclusions reached by these investigators, their studies can be used as points of departure and to build up testable hypotheses. Such rigour has generally been absent in the studies of political behaviour in India and most political concepts are yet to be translated into "data language" in the Indian context.

At the substantive level, the assumed direct and one-way relationship between values and political decisions have led to an oversimplified concept of human behaviour and, particularly, of group dynamics. It is true that many aspects of traditional authority or power structure in villages and, especially, political thought could be traced to Indian social values successfully, but the gap between this structure and thought, on the one hand, and present day political actualities and concepts is an uncomfortably obvious one, particularly when viewed against the background of values that differentiate elite cultures from little-community or folk traditions.

Recognition however is growing that political decisions depend as much on values of critical individuals and subgroups as on modal values in the culture. The increased attention being given to elite or leadership values may be a reflection of this recognition. For example, Weiner's (1965a, 1965b), Wolfsohn's (1963) and Morris-Jones' (1963a, 1963b) analyses represent interesting attempts to use the nature of confrontation between elite and mass cultures, in addition to that between the society and the state, as a dynamic concept that could help interpret political change in India. The distinctive normative features of these two cultures, reinforced by different histories, weltanschauungen, loyalties, powers and, even by different patterns of socialization, impinge upon and percolate

into one another. These "interchanges" are often politically as critical as the values themselves.

Also, given the significance of values in any decision-making situation, the involved interaction amongst values, perceived political realities and cathexes, which lead to an actual political decision, remain to be taken adequately into consideration. For example, it is not enough to study leadership values at a particular level of political functioning, but the context in which these values operate, their embeddedness in history or tradition, in the complex and variegated process of socialization, in the dynamics of contemporary political culture, and their relation with the values of other politically significant groups and realities at different levels, must be considered to equip the leadership values with a respectable degree of predictive power.

In sum, the present review seems to show that both "pure" value concepts and "pure" evaluative decisions are becoming scarce commodities. The former are in a state of flux in Indian politics and the latter in group situations have always been more artefacts. Indian cultural values, as they survive today and are relevant to present-day political behaviour, have dimensions which cannot be specified solely from their history, though such an exercise may be necessary in deriving for a "conceptual itinerary" and for marking out a point of departure. Moreover, the contrast between the operative individual and group values, on the one hand, and the cultural values, on the other, is becoming sharper with the quickening tempo of social and political changes. The situation is further complicated by the presence of different sets of values within different functional areas, groups and levels of the society, and by the different degrees of commitment to societal ethics. Nothing

can therefore be more fruitless than chasing political behaviour of individuals and groups, equipped with only the conceptual tool of values -- abstracted, reified and isolated from other aspects of the sociopolitical and culture-personality systems. It is by recognising these complexities in interrelationships and in priorities, and by skillfully building this recognition into research designs, that one can hope to put value concepts to their most productive use.

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